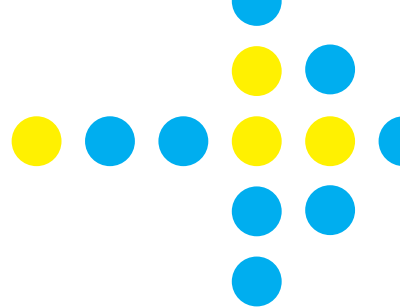


Recruitment



National Disability Employment Awareness Month

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). It's designed to build awareness about the considerable contributions of people with disabilities, while removing obstacles to their employment.



Key Step: Host a related event, for example, disability mentoring day, job shadowing or mock interviews to commemorate the value and spirit of the month.

Disability Mentoring Day

This nationwide event, celebrated on the third Wednesday of October as part of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, sparks career development for students with disabilities, while increasing awareness among employers that people with disabilities are an abundant talent pool.



Key Step: Invite managers and key employees to serve as mentors, sourcing interested students from local schools and the Board of Education and Services for the Blind and the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services.

Job Shadowing

With job shadowing, the job seeker accompanies an employee for a day to learn about the requirements of a job. In addition to providing an on-the-job experience, it allows the employer to see what it's like to have an employee with a disability in the workplace, increasing the comfort level for employer and employee alike.



Key Step: Contact local high schools and colleges as well as the Board of Education and Services for the Blind and the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services.

Mock Interviews

A mock interview mirrors an actual interview, providing a safe environment for job seekers to improve their interviewing skills while allowing the organization's representatives to become secure interviewing people with disabilities.



Key Step: Contact local high schools and colleges as well as the Board of Education and Services for the Blind and the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services.

Job Fairs

Job fairs provide a convenient way to bring employer and job candidate together. In Connecticut, job fairs are often sponsored by the Connecticut Department of Labor and held throughout the year. Other job fairs are specifically aimed at the employment of people with disabilities. Your participation in these job fairs is proof of your commitment to hiring people with disabilities.



Key Step: Find out about upcoming job fairs in your area well before you wish to participate and make a plan to attend.

Connecticut Business Leadership Network

Connecticut's Business Leadership Network (CT BLN), part of Business Leadership Networks throughout the country, consists of organizations of all sizes and industries that seek to maximize employment opportunities for people with disabilities. A comprehensive resource, you'll learn about networking opportunities, best practices, job accommodations and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), plus have access to free training programs.



Key Step: Join the Connecticut Business Leadership Network.

Connecticut Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies

In Connecticut, there are two vocational rehabilitation programs that help create opportunities for people with disabilities to live and work independently. They include:

- The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS): Serving individuals with other disabilities
- The Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB): Serving individuals who are legally blind

Both programs cultivate relationships with employers and provide job seekers with information about job openings



Key Step: Identify one goal you'd like to achieve, whether it's to fill a position or provide disability-related support and contact BEBS or BRS.

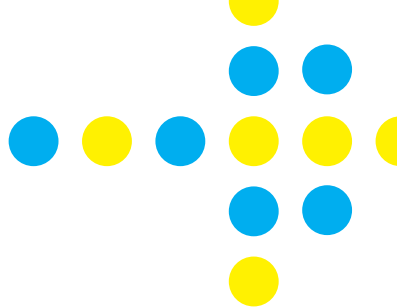
Be sure to include employees with disabilities in your recruitment process.
Remember: Nothing about us without us.

Start Here.

Email-info@connect-ability.com or call 1.866.844.1903.



Hiring



Informational Interviews

These informal, fact-finding interviews provide a starting point for job seekers to learn, firsthand, about your organization and opportunities for employment and allow you to interact and learn from people with disabilities.



Key Step: To find potential interviewees, contact local high schools and colleges as well as the Board of Education and Services for the Blind and the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services.

Internships

Internships provide opportunities for employers and employees to learn from each other and break down stereotypes. Typically, the intern is hired for an agreed-upon period in his or her chosen field. The intern may be unpaid or paid at least minimum wage. At the end of the internship, there is no obligation to offer permanent employment.



Key Step: Explore your organization's internship policy. If you don't have one, consider creating one that includes guidelines about business practices, compensation and expectations.

Position Announcements to Partners

A more targeted approach to find a qualified job candidate is to post announcements to our disability recruitment partners. It sends a message to the business community of your intentions as well as creates a supportive atmosphere for people with disabilities to feel more comfortable pursuing their job goals.



Key Step: Identify the disability recruitment partner(s) you'd like to have post your job position announcements. They include: the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, the Board of Education and Services for the Blind, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the Department of Developmental Services. Additional partners can include colleges, independent living centers and, of course, Connect-Ability.

JobCentral.com

The extensive online resource, JobCentral National Labor Exchange, provides a forum for employers to post job openings and people to find jobs. The State of Connecticut posts all positions on JobCentral, but many private employers use the resource as well. In your posting, state “People with disabilities are encouraged to apply.” In an age where talent is what separates the good from the great organizations, it’s important to expand your search to find the most qualified people.



Key Step: Visit JobCentral.com and post your job openings with an employer designation.

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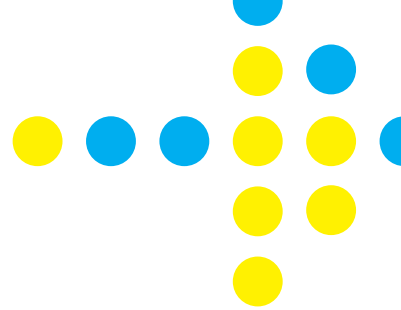
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Retention



Internal Networking Group

The workplace inherently offers an opportunity to connect with one another. Building upon this natural confluence of people and ideas, internal networking for individuals with disabilities promotes an open dialogue among employees as well as enhances camaraderie and problem solving. In addition, it helps create a positive work environment for everyone.



Key Step: Create a planning committee of employees who want to develop an internal networking group about disability issues.

Enhanced Existing Employee Assistance Program

Many companies offer Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services to help their employees cope with daily life both at home and at work, including handling stress, family problems and financial obligations. By expanding your EAP services to include people with disabilities, you help new hires, employees who acquire a disability and employees who have a loved one with a disability. An EAP that includes disability-related support improves employees' self worth, performance and productivity.



Key Step: Talk to your EAP provider or consider initiating an EAP. You'll want to gauge your provider's expertise in disability, identifying how they can offer you additional training and/or resources for your business.

Disability in Diversity Training

Until recently, one of the largest populations in America has been overlooked in diversity training: people with disabilities. Incorporating disability training into diversity training helps you bring different people with different perspectives into your workplace. A company that's comfortable with employees who happen to become disabled can make it easier for you to keep them. Considering the cost of replacing a valued employee, it's important to do what you can to keep a proven talent working for you.



Key Step: If your current diversity training doesn't include people with disabilities, explore the training resources that best meet your business needs and goals.

Disability Components in Human Resource Training

Incorporating disability awareness training into existing education for human resource professionals can help every aspect of staffing, from hiring through retention and beyond. By “training the trainer,” disability information can also be integrated into your orientation process, creating a more enlightened, positive workplace and help everyone be comfortable with an employee who becomes disabled. Part of that comfort level starts with an understanding that accommodations on the job are often inexpensive and easy to implement. As a result, you make it easier for people with disabilities to apply for, obtain and advance in their position.



Key Step: Review your existing human resource training to incorporate disability components.

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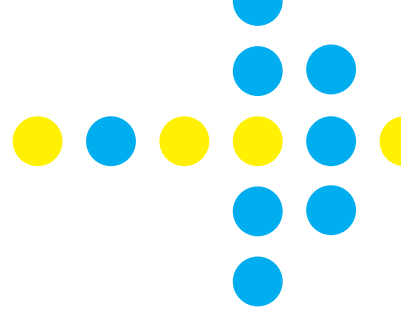
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Getting Started



Connect-Ability

An initiative connecting Connecticut employers with the state's talent pool of people with disabilities. Connect-Ability will open minds by helping employers see the ability, not the disability. The initiative will bring together more resources than ever to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Addressing the fundamental barriers to employment, it is one of the first initiatives of its kind in the nation and a model for other states planning similar efforts. Connect-Ability is funded by a four-year federal grant from the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and managed by the Connecticut Department of Social Services. Contact: 1-866-844-1903 or www.Connect-Ability.com.



Key Step: Connect-Ability may refer you to:

State of Connecticut Board of Education Services for the Blind (BESB)

Proudly serving individuals with visual limitations for over a century, BESB is the oldest continually operating state agency for the blind in the U.S. BESB helps children who are visually impaired or legally blind and adults who are legally blind to succeed. BESB also serves Connecticut businesses as a resource to help employers find and keep good people with visual impairments by providing a variety of services from pre-screening applicants to enhancing employee retention.

State Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)

The DSS Bureau of Rehabilitation Services mission is to create opportunities that enable individuals with significant disabilities to work competitively and live independently. BRS strives to provide appropriate, individualized services, develop effective partnerships and share sufficient information so that consumers and their families may make informed choices about the rehabilitation process and employment options. Three major components of BRS include Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Disability Determination Services and the Independent Living Program.

CT Business Leadership Network (CT BLN)

Strives to maximize employment opportunities for people with disabilities by working with businesses, governmental organizations and community services agencies in supportive and productive partnerships. Our mission is to improve recruitment and retention of qualified persons with disabilities, establish an inclusive work culture and promote the adoption of best practice initiatives. Services include networking opportunities, ADA and Diversity Training.

Connecticut Department of Labor

Offers a comprehensive website of disability information for employers. Topics include everything from assistive technology to federal and state resources, to assistance with recruitment and workplace accommodations.

CT Tech Act Project

Mission is to increase independence and improve the lives of individuals with disabilities through increased access to Assistive Technology for work, school and community living.

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

A service provided by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), JAN is one of several ODEP programs that can help employers hire, retain and promote qualified employees/applicants with disabilities. JAN also addresses issues pertaining to accessibility and is nationally recognized as a prime resource for employers.

The Employer Assistance & Recruiting Network (EARN)

The nation's premier provider of cost-free services to help employers recruit and hire qualified workers to meet their workforce needs. In addition, EARN assists employers in understanding the practical business reasons for, as well as the practices that facilitate the recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities.

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